

Chairman speaks of "frightening" financial position

SUPPORTERS' CLUB TREASURER GIVES STERN WARNING AT WANDERERS A.G.M.

Club could fold in two or three years

SPEAKING at the Wycombe Wanderers' F.C. annual meeting, held in the Oak Room at High Wycombe Town Hall, treasurer of the supporters' club, Jack Richardson, sounded this stern warning about the future of the football club. "Unless the serious financial position of this club improves it could be extinct within two or three years—which would be a very big blow to the town."

"Fortunately," Mr. Richardson said, "the supporters' club was able to donate £4,000 to the club. To improve income, I suggest that a pools scheme should be run, with a full-time officer, along the same lines as those adopted by many professional and semi-professional clubs."

The immense value of the support of the club can only be measured by the fact that there still remains a deficit for the 1967-68 season of £1,674. Opening the meeting, chairman Jack Smeethurn went through secretary Bill Hayter's report concerning on the frightening financial aspect and the wonderful gift from the supporters' club.

NEW COMPETITION

Mr. Smeethurn informed the meeting that Wanderers would compete in one new competition this coming season—the Mithras Floodlight Cup, which is a knock-out competition. He also added that there had been a proposal for the Wycombe Floodlight League Cup. Instead of being organised as a league the competition is to be run on a knock-out basis, and already last year's losing amateur cup finalists, Chesham United, have applied to take part in the tournament.

Referring to the two matches against professional opposition last weekend, Q.P.R., both of which Wycombe won, Mr. Smeethurn commented: "The better the opposition the better we seem to play," and he added: "In the Isthmian League we had a very disappointing season scoring a lot of goals yet letting a lot through."

Because of economic reasons Wanderers have been forced to disband the 'A' side. Therefore, manager-coach, Barry Darville, is to manage both the first and reserve teams, reliving Paul Bates' role as reserve side manager. Mrs. Smeethurn thanked Paul Bates, John Bushell, secretary of the 'A' team, and Ivor Kelloway,

member of the 'A' side for their hard work during the past season.

Owing to pressure of business, treasurer, Alan Backstraw, has reluctantly announced his resignation from the post. Explaining his decision Mr. Backstraw said: "I have had a lot of heart-searching in making this decision, and I am afraid there may have been no internal trouble in the club and the only reason I decided to resign is purely due to lack of time."

Former honorary financial secretary, Reg. Maskell, has offered to take over as treasurer, and he will be assisted by Roger Lee who fills the financial secretary position.

LIFE MEMBERS

A former leading Wanderers' winger, Billy O'Gorman, a life-member of the club, proposed to the meeting that Harry Bates should also be elected a life member. This motion was seconded by secretary, Bill Hayter, and was carried unanimously.

Among the suggestions put forward from the floor were these: that there should be better bill-posting of announcing matches, although Mr. Hayter pointed out, 300 posters were distributed around High Wycombe and district.

That there should be a page in the programme for supporters' club notes and their new secretary, George Rose, agreed to fill it if the space became available.

One of the vice-presidents approved his concern at the condition of the ground at Leakes

Park and particularly the condition of the grass, general, where re-turfing has been carried out. Chairman Mr. Smeethurn assured the critic that by the beginning of the season the ground will be in excellent condition.

Chairman of the Wycombe Combination Reg. Holt, who is a director member of the Wanderers' match committee, advised that he would like to see closer co-operation between the club and the junior sides in the town. One way Mr. Holt felt this could be achieved was by setting aside Good Friday, so that the local cup competition could stage their final at Leakes Park.

Mr. Smeethurn pointed out that Good Friday day "is a good day for taking money through the turnstiles" and felt that the club should have first option on the site of the ground.

KEEP FAITH

Proposing the motion that the Wycombe Cup competition should have the use of Leakes Park on Good Fridays Mr. Holt said: "I think it is important that we should keep faith with the junior clubs." Les Wheeler seconded the motion.

Secretary, Bill Hayter, and Jack Richardson proposed the amendment that the motion on the use of Leakes Park on Good Fridays should be left to the general committee, which was passed by the meeting.

A closer breakdown of the financial situation reveals that the gate-takings from home matches were down by £3,974 and the loss on the share of cup-ties was £1,275.

It would appear from the balance-sheets that the administrators watched their expenditure very carefully last year, re-organising the main financial unit; with small savings having been made on a number of items, which in itself is praiseworthy during these times of rising prices.

F.A. CUP DRAW

In their first qualifying round in the F.A. Cup Wycombe Wanderers have been drawn at home to meet fellow Isthmian League St. Albans City on Saturday, September 21.

In the Amateur Cup Wycombe have been excused until the first round proper.